

Cornwall Council report

Cllr Dick Cole

Time period: 24th January – 25th February 2025

1.0 Council meetings

Over the last month, physical meetings at Cornwall Council included Full Council, Corporate, Finance and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee, China Clay Area and Luxulyan Community Area Partnership, and a meeting of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of CAPs.

Other physical meetings included St Dennis Parish Council (two), St Enoder Parish Council (two), Cornish Lithium Liaison Group, and the Fraddon Village Hall Committee (two).

Meetings via Teams or Zoom video-conferencing included the Cornish National Minority Working Group (and associated preparatory meeting), a briefing on A30 road improvements, Group Leaders meeting, and a briefing in advance of Cornwall Council's February Full Council meeting.

In addition, I have had informal meetings with a number of individuals.

2.0 Full Council on 25th February 2025

Cornwall Council set its budget for 2025/2026 at its most recent Full Council meeting. A number of Conservative councillors had resigned from the administration in recent days, but they still got the budget through by 39 votes to 35 with three abstentions.

The budget includes a council tax increase of 4.99%, alongside cuts to a number of services plus redundancies. It was not supported by the Mebyon Kernow / Green Group, which I lead.

3.0 "Report it"

Over the last two months, I have reported a number of local issues of concern to residents. If you spot any problems, you can also report it through Cornwall Council's website at: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/report-something/>

ST DENNIS PARISH

4.0 Solar farm near Trerice [PA24/09234]

I attended the meeting of the Parish Council on 10th February at which the applicants, Statkraft, addressed councillors. It was also the meeting at which councillors agreed a significant objection to the proposal.

I am still keen to hear from people about their views on the development.

5.0 Traffic matters

In my last report, I noted how I had submitted a formal request to Cornwall Council for a full feasibility study / assessment about traffic matters in St Dennis. I am presently following this up on this with the relevant council officer.

6.0 Hall Road play area

I have previously reported that Cornwall Council is working up a project to look at the "devolution" of small play areas and green spaces to Parish Councils throughout Clay Country. St Dennis Parish Council has agreed to take on ownership of the play area at Hall Road. I have been liaising with officers at Cornwall Council about this and seeking for the necessary legal transfer to St Dennis Parish Council to commence as soon as possible.

7.0 Newsletter

I have produced a newsletter about my work in St Dennis Parish over the last six months. I will be out delivering these in the next few days.

ST ENODER PARISH

8.0 Streetlighting

St Enoder Parish Council and I have been informed that Cornwall Council will be switching off streetlights across St Enoder Parish [between midnight and 5.00] from the first week in March. The Council and I were not consulted about this – as I had expected – but was simply told it was happening.

I am speaking to parish councillors about this and I will be making further representations to Cornwall Council on this matter.

9.0 Planning

9.1 Policy changes

Last month, I reported that the new Government had announced significant changes to the planning system and had imposed a mandatory annual housing target of 4,421 on Cornwall and council officers have concluded that the housing policies in the Cornwall Local Plan are now considered out-of-date. And that, in addition, housing policies in Neighbourhood Plans – such as ours in St Enoder Parish – will also be given little or no weight when planning decisions are made.

Cornwall Council has been consulting on an interim statement about how the authority operates within this new planning context. On behalf of St Enoder Parish Council, I drafted a response to the consultation, which challenged why the statement is helping to undermine Neighbourhood Plans and the provision of exception sites, through which affordable homes are provided.

9.2 Unit 2, Indian Queens Industrial Estate (PA24/07158)

The retrospective application for a door opening into the rear of the industrial unit and related issues has been approved by Cornwall Council. I received a wide range of objections to the application, many of which related to the access that had been cut through the hedge along Moorland Road. The area between the hedge and the industrial building will officially become a parking area, which will hopefully help to reduce car parking around the industrial estate.

I have worked hard to get the conditions strengthened as much as possible.

I can confirm that the "access onto Moorland Road shall be closed up in full within six months ... by a stone-faced earth bank to match, in terms of width and design, the stone-faced earth bank on both sides of the existing opening." I have also got the screening strengthened.

10.0 Seaview Terrace

I previously reported that I had been able to get a 40mph speed limit along the stretch of road by Seaview Terrace. Sadly, there has been yet another accident at this location. I am speaking to local residents and there will be a site meeting to discuss what has happened on 17th March.

11.0 Vandalism

The Parish Clerk and I have been liaising with the local Police about some vandalism that has taken place in Fraddon over the last few weeks. This has included significant damage to one of the Parish Council's mobile speed visors, which will need to be sent away for repair, a Cornwall Council waste bin and the old seats in the Fraddon Millennium Green.

12.0 Small play areas and green spaces

I have previously reported that Cornwall Council is working up a project to look at the "devolution" of small play areas and green spaces to Parish Councils throughout Clay Country. I have been liaising with officers at Cornwall Council about this and seeking for the necessary legal transfer of those in St Ender Parish Council to commence as soon as possible.

13.0 Newsletter

I have been out and about in St Ender Parish throughout February delivering newsletters about my work over the last 12 months.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL FAMILIES

14.0 Advice

In addition, I have assisted numerous households and individuals with guidance and advice on a range of topics.